(d) whether the matter has been taken up with US Government; and

(e) if so, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) India has submitted its offer in basic telecommunications services to WTO on its own keeping in view the national policy objectives. During discussions there was no reference of open up telecom sector or face special 301: US' as has appeared in the news in Hindustan Times dated Oct. 15, 1996.

(c) to (e) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

[*Translation*]

Taxation Policy

2062. SHRI NITISH KUMAR:
SHRI SURENDRA YADAV:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the steel industry has not been developing properly in the country due to the present taxation policy and rates thereof;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government have taken necessary action to effect comprehensive improvement in the present taxation policy;

(d) if so, the full details of the action taken; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) Following the economic liberalisation policy of the Government since 1991, the steel sector has registered impressive growth.

(c) to (e) In a dynamic economic environment, the Government effects appropriate changes in the taxation and fiscal policy, from time to time, to meet the requirements of the growing industry. These changes are reflected in the budget.

[*English*]

Facilities to Jobless Workers in Industries

2063. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the facilities extended to the jobless workers of those industries which were shut down or likely to be shut down in the capital, Delhi on the directives of the Supreme Court;

(b) whether Supreme Court has issued guidelines to the managers of these industries regarding service benefits etc. to the working and jobless workers of these industries;

(c) whether Government have received representations regarding refusal to provide service benefits etc. to these effected workers;

(d) if so, the number of complaints received as on date from various labour organisations, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken or likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (e) The Supreme Court of India in the inter-locutory Application No.22 in Writ Petition(c) No.4677 of 1985 ordered on 8.7.96 to close down/relocate from Delhi 168 industries which are listed as hazardous. Subsequently, the Hon'ble Supreme Court further directed to close down another 513 units w.e.f. 31.1.97 and 43 units w.e.f. 28.2.97. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has also given direction that the workmen employed in these industries were entitled to the following rights and benefits:-

(1) The workmen shall have continuity of employment at the new town and place where the industry is shifted. The terms and conditions of their employment shall not be altered to their detriment.

(2) The period between the closure of the industry in Delhi and its restart at the place of relocation shall be treated as active employment and the workmen shall be paid their full wages with continuity of service.

(3) All those workmen who agree to shift with the industry shall be given one year wages as "Shifting Bonus" to help them settle at the new location.

(4) The gratuity amount payable to any workman shall be paid in addition.

(5) The workmen employed in the industries which fail to relocate and the workmen who are not willing to shift alongwith the relocated industries, shall be deemed to have been retrenched with effect from the stipulated date of closing of industries, provided they have been in continuous service for not less than one year in the industries concerned before the said dates. Besides the compensation payable under Section 25F(b) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, the workmen will also be paid one year of wages as additional compensation.

Subsequently, following reports of the industries not showing any inclination for re-location and in the light of apprehension that the industries were more interested in selling part of the land and utilise the money so received for purposes other than for re-location, a suo moto statement was placed on behalf of the Union Labour Minister in both Houses of Parliament on 28th November, 1996 expressing grave concern of the Union Government in this regard. An application for direction on behalf of Union of India was also filed in the Supreme Court. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has passed another Order on 4.12.96, inter alia providing the following additional relief to the workmen:-

(i) The industries which fail to relocate and opt for closure shall pay 6 years of wages to the workmen as "additional compensation" instead of one year. However, the workers who refuse to be relocated alongwith the industries shall be entitled for one year of wages only as "additional compensation".

(ii) Workmen occupying residential quarters provided by the employers shall continue to occupy the premises till alternate premises is provided at the relocated site by the employer. In case of closure of the unit, workers may continue at the present residential premises provided by the employer for 1 ½ years. In case the employer wants to compensate them in lieu of occupation of quarter, they shall pay a sum of Rs.20,000/- to each of the workmen for asking them for immediate vacation. It would be open to the management to pay the amount in instalments but the total amount along with the other compensation must be paid before April 30, 1997. As the stipulated deadline in the modified direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 4.12.96 is not yet over, the question of receipt of representation for non payment of service benefits does not arise.

Loss to Hindustan Copper Limited

2064. LT. GENERAL SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of loss incurred by the Hindustan Copper Limited during April-November, 1996;

(b) the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the above organisation has sought a short term loan from the Government to meet the loss;

(d) if so, the details thereof and steps taken by the Government to release the amount;

(e) whether the Hindustan Copper Limited has requested the Government to raise the Customs duty on Copper; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) suffered a net loss of Rs. 99.32 crores during April-November,96 mainly due to substantial fall in LME price of copper, reduction in Customs Duty on copper and hike in Petroleum Price and Railway freight in the last Central Budget.

(c) to (f) In view of the loss incurred by the Hindustan Copper Limited, the Company had requested for increase in Custom Duty on copper and had also asked for Budgetary support for payment of wages and salaries and to meet the Plan expenditure. The matter was taken up by the Ministry of Mines with Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission and a provision of Rs.13 cores has been made to meet the Plan expenditure in the Budget Estimates for 1997-98.

Expansion of Airports in Karnataka

2065. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal for the expansion of the existing airports in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof and when these airports are likely to be expanded;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the present length of the runway of all airports in Karnataka;

(e) the airports in Karnataka equipped with modern equipments; and

(f) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Construction of new integrated international block at an estimated cost of Rs.13.70 crores at Bangalore airport is likely to be completed in April, 1998. There is a proposal to construct a new runway of dimensions 8000 ft. x 150 ft. alongwith associated facilities at Mangalore airport to operate AB-300 class of aircraft during 9th Plan period. In addition, development of Hassan airport for operation of 50 seater aircraft is part of the plan. Further, upgradation of Hubli and Belgaum airports would be taken up in the Ninth Plan period, subject to availability of funds.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Runway length of airports in Karnataka are as under (1) Bangalore (HAL): 10850 ft. (ii) Belgaum : 5785 ft. (iii) : Hubli : 4535 ft. (iv) Mangalore : 5800 ft. (v) Mysore: 4400 ft. (fair weather strip) and (vi) Hassan: 3950 ft. (Kutcha strip).

(e) and (f) Bangalore and Mangalore are equipped with navigational aids such as Very High Frequency Omni Range, Distance Measuring Equipment. instrument Landing System and night landing facilities like High Intensity runway lights, Precision Approach Path Indicator, Apron Flood lights, and Obstruction Lights. Hubli has a non-directional beacon and Belgaum has non-directional beacon, doppler VOR, Distance Measuring Equipment, Precision approach path indicator and VHF Communication equipment.

[*Translation*]

Fault Control

2066. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of computers purchased to work on "fault control" under various General Managers of MTNL, Delhi during the last three years;